

Lesson Plan – Session Four

The Heroic Christ:

Finding God’s Power to Hold and Lead

Begin with prayer: #4 Incarnation, Book of Common Prayer, page 252; free prayer, then: “Lord in your mercy...” The Lord’s Prayer

A. **Introduction:** Garrison Keillor (quoted in February 2009, “The Living Church”) “I don’t doubt God’s existence - there he is; but I doubt his interest in us right now and I haven’t the faintest idea what he wants from me.”

Many today, even in the Lake Wobegone Lutheran Church, could say the same thing. This is the situation of not living close enough for God to really empower us- like having a car in the driveway with no gas in it. Those who have witnessed out of a relationship of intimacy with the divine, have used the language of mutual indwelling (God, not only with us, but within us). Note St. Patrick’s Breastplate:”I bind unto myself today...the power of God to hold & lead.”

God truly *holds* us in life. It is we who are distracted, then lose interest, and then feel lost or abandoned. And then with intimacy, divine guidance is there for all who would seek it. “He leads me beside still waters...guides me upon right pathways for his name’s sake.”

B. **God’s Power to Hold** An expression of **Jesus as Lord**

Show various images of Christ as *Pantocrator* –“Ruler of All” (available on Wikipedia.) The 4th Century icon from St. Catherine’s Monastery, Mt. Sinai is described somewhat in the text of *Fully Alive Now* chapter 5, page 4 (“The Adult Christ, 1”). (Distribute a take-home print for each participant.)When the Gospel Book is open, that version is often called “Christ Enthroned, the Teacher.” This is the type of the 16th Cent. Novgorod *Pantocrator*. The text inscribed on the book varies, but is often, “I am the light of the World.” Since the Cyrillic is blurred it will be easy to ask group to think of what brief words they would inscribe.

Journal and share at table: *What word do I see in the Lord’s book? What is Christ saying to me, and how do I feel about it? Share around the table, 5-10 minutes.*

C. **How to Find God’s Power to hold: two prayerful ways.**

1. *The Way of Sanctified Imagination.* Exercise on Page 5, “Tree of Life: A journey into depth.” Play quiet music as leader begins script (after short Intro). No journaling this time. Ask for some feedback as a whole group, “**What did you experience?**” And then move on to consider image-less prayer.
2. *The Way of Contemplation. Centering Prayer,* a contemporary approach. Provide a bit of history, acknowledge the Centering Prayer Group if there is one. Share your experience. Why? Simple as this practice is, it requires regularity and persistence. Outline the method (Newsprint?): **a.** Go to the Father in love and faith. **b.** Rest quietly; as thoughts arise, gently let them go. **c.** Use prayer word to

return to a. (Maybe you have another way to outline this.)
minutes to experience, then debrief and answer questions.

Since this is an introduction, take five

D. How to Find God's Power to Lead: Divine Guidance.

1. Use section from the book, Page 11, "Finding the Red Thread." Follow with journaling questions 1 and 2. Then share answers around the table.
2. This theme can be continued next week. Handout for take-home: "*Moving with God's Wind, a model for seeking and finding guidance from God.*" Ask group to use this method for a particular concern this week. Report next session what you experienced.

NEXT WEEK, the final session continues work with the adult Christ heroic archetype,

The Lord Jesus, the Savior